



# Native Plant Installation Guide

DIGITAL COPY



**TreePeople**



Congratulations on purchasing a Native Garden Kit and taking the first steps to transforming your lawn into a native garden. Planting natives at home and in the community requires less water, looks beautiful, supports wildlife, creates healthy soil, and is easier and cheaper to maintain.

## FACTS ABOUT GRASS

- In the Los Angeles area, about half of our drinking water is used for irrigating landscapes.
- According to the Public Policy Institute of California, per square foot, 3 gallons of water each month is used for watering grass lawns alone. ([Source](#))
- These non-native grass lawns tend to be shallow-rooted, requiring watering a few times a week. For the average lawn, that is about 72,000 gallons of water per year! ([Source](#))
- Typically, the soil beneath the dense, shallow roots is compacted. Compaction results in poor water absorption and unhealthy soil lacking in oxygen, water and nutrients.
- By removing some or all grass in our landscapes and replacing it with native plants and mulch, we have the potential to reduce outdoor water needs by 83% and create healthier soil that allows water to permeate into the ground. ([Source](#))



# Steps to Prepare Your Garden

## Step 1

Measure your garden space.

## Step 2 (Optional)

Apply for turf replacement rebate program—Cash For Grass Rebate Program at [SoCalWaterSmart.com](https://www.socalwatersmart.com) or [BeWaterWise.com](https://www.bewaterwise.com).

Applying for and receiving provisional approval must be completed prior to step 3

## Step 3

Remove grass: [How To Remove Your Turf Video](#) in English; [Video en Español](#)

## Step 4

Determine whether your plot is in full-sun or partial shade.

## Step 5

[Determine your soil's ability to drain.](#)  
Video in English; Video en Español

## Step 6

Review your existing irrigation system.

- If you have spray (aka overhead irrigation or sprinklers), we encourage converting to drip irrigation or hand watering.
- Hand watering helps native plants establish healthy root systems. When possible this is the preferred method

## Step 7

Use guide to install garden.



# Native Plant Guide



## Before Planting

Please consult your local municipality, HOA or POA if you live in a neighborhood managed by one, or other organizations to ensure you comply with regulations and ordinances. Some districts and cities maintain requirements, permitting, or zoning that dictates what species can be planted.



## Installing Your Native Garden Kit

Now that you have native plants, learn [how to install your climate appropriate garden](#). Learn [how to contour your yard](#) to capture runoff from your roof and [add a rain garden](#) to your native garden. Use the provided recommended site plan to layout your plants.



## Maintaining Your New Garden

Use the checklist provided with this insert to ensure your garden is healthy year round. Feel free to check out [this video](#) from our Learn at Home series titled “How to care for your Southern California native plant garden.”



## Watering Native Plants

Knowing the watering schedule is important. [This video](#) explains how native plants and their water needs follow southern California’s typical precipitation pattern. For specific information on watering newly planted natives plants checkout [this time stamped link](#).



# Caring for Your Garden



## The Four D's

How to care for your native garden once it's established...look for the four "D"s and remove them properly. For more information, see TreePeople's article.

- Dead branches/leaves
- Deranged branches (branches that touch/cross or are otherwise malformed)
- Damaged (uneven or irregular/broken branches)
- Diseased parts of the plant

## Weeding

Weeding is probably the general maintenance task that needs to happen the most. Be sure to pull the entire plant, including the root, and before it goes to seed.

## Mulching

Mulch is important to soil and plant health and acts like a sponge when it rains – allowing water to be held and slowly seep into the ground. It reduces soil compaction, soil erosion, discourages weeds, and more.

### Mulching Tips:

- Replace mulch as needed to maintain a 3-4 inch layer.
- Keep mulch at least 3-5 inches away from the base of trees and shrubs.
- As the garden matures and the space between plants closes (about 2-4 years), the need to add mulch decreases.

### Where to get mulch:

- You can request free mulch to be delivered from a local arborist / professional tree trimming company. Arborists are specialists who prune trees.
- Search the web under "Tree Service" to find someone in the area.
- Let them know you will be using it around plants and don't want wood chips from a diseased tree or palms.

### How much mulch?

- Measure the length and width of the areas you want to mulch. The measurements should be in feet.
- Mulch is delivered by the cubic yard. To figure out how many cubic yards you need, follow this formula:
  - Multiply the width by the length (in feet) to get the square footage of the area: width x length = area (square feet)
  - Multiply the area by .33 feet (4" depth of mulch) area x .33 = cubic feet
  - To get the cubic yards, divide by 27: cubic feet ÷ 27 = cubic yards



# Monthly Maintenance Checklist

Every month use this checklist to assess your sustainable garden maintenance needs.

## SOIL

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**Is there a 3 - 4" layer of mulch over the soil?**

- Yes
- No! Refresh site with more mulch.

**Are there any berms that have flattened and need to be rebuilt?**

- No
- Yes! Rebuild the berm with more soil and cover with mulch.

**Does my swale and/or rain garden have built up sediment and leaves?**

- No
- Yes! Remove leaves and anything else that is piling up in the basin.

## TREES

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**Are there any trees with dead, diseased, damaged or deranged branches?**

- No
- Yes! Properly remove them using a reduction or removal cut.

**Are there any stakes or ties that need to be removed or adjusted?**

- No
- Yes! Adjust stakes and ties so they do not rub or harm the tree, or remove if the tree is established.

**Has mulch piled up against the trunk?**

- No
- Yes! Push back mulch away from the trunk.

## PLANTS

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**Are there any plants with dead flowers?**

- No
- Yes! Remove them to encourage more flowers.

**Are there any plants with dead branches?**

- No
- Yes! Properly remove them using a reduction or removal cut.

**Are there any branches blocking pathways?**

- No
- Yes! Use a reduction cut or remove the entire branch with a removal cut.

**Are there any stressed or dead plants?**

- No
- Yes! This could be for many reasons, such as the wrong soil type, water needs, sun needs, or irrigation failure. Investigate and make appropriate changes.

**Are there any plants that need replacing?**

- No
- Yes! Choose a replacement that is appropriate to climate zone, sun needs, and has the same watering needs as the surrounding plants.

**Are there any weeds?**

- No
- Yes! Remove the weed including its entire root as soon as possible, especially before it goes to seed.



## IRRIGATION

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**Are there any leaks in the system causing pooling of water or flooding?**

- No
- Yes! Replace any leaky tubing or sprinkler heads.

**Does my automatic irrigation system need seasonal adjusting?**

- No
- Yes! Adjust the timing appropriate to the season. Go to [bewaterwise.com/calculator.html](http://bewaterwise.com/calculator.html) to determine the watering schedule.

## HARDSCAPES OR OTHER FEATURES

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**Is there built up dirt and debris in between my pavers?**

- No
- Yes! Sweep away any debris to ensure water can infiltrate between pavers.

**Is there dirt on my permeable pavement?**

- No
- Yes! Use a shop vacuum to remove built up dirt to ensure water can infiltrate.

**Is there any debris or trash in the trench or other drains?**

- No
- Yes! Use a broom or hose to flush it out.

## RAIN BARRELS/WATER TANKS

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**Do my water tanks need cleaning out of any excessive built-up organic matter?**

- No
- Yes! Tanks that continuously hold water will develop biofilms on surfaces below the water level. These are naturally occurring and not harmful. If excessive sediment accumulates on the tank bottom empty all the water out and use a wet-dry vacuum to remove any remaining water and sediment from the tank.

**Are my rain gutters filled with leaves and dirt?**

- No
- Yes! Carefully remove debris. Consider installing a gutter guard.

**Are there any holes in the mosquito screens?**

- No
- Yes! First check for mosquito larvae in the water. If found, either clean out the tank completely or add a mosquito “dunk.” Replace damaged filters/screens.

## More Information

For more information on how to do specific maintenance tasks, go to TreePeople’s Learn Center for downloadable how-tos, resources, videos, and more.

[treepeople.org/learn](http://treepeople.org/learn)



Spring 2023 Kit Offerings

“Full Sun”

Common Name	Botanical Name	Color	Blooming Season	Sun Profile	Sq. Ft & Dimensions	Soil Type	Sunset Zones	Water Needs
Cleveland sage	<a href="#">Salvia clevelandii</a> Winnifred Gilman	Purple	Spring, Summer	Full Sun, Part shade	33; 3 - 4 ft tall 3 - 4 ft wide	sandy, coarse- grained or other fast draining soils (F)	7, 8, 9, 14*, 15*, 16*, 17*, 18, 19*, 20*, 21*, 22*, 23*, 24*	Low
Margarita BOP penstemon	<a href="#">Penstemon heterophyllus</a>	Purple, Blue	Spring, Summer	Full Sun, Part shade	7; 3.3 - 5 ft tall 5 ft wide	Tolerates a wide variety of soils (FMS)	2, 7*, 14, 15*, 16*, 17*, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24	Very Low
Firecracker penstemon	<a href="#">Penstemon eatonii</a>	Yellow, red	Spring, Summer	Full Sun, Part Shade	3; 2.5 - 3.3 ft tall 3 ft wide	Sand or decomposed granite (F)	1, 2, 3, 7*, 10, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21	Very Low
'Silver Carpet'	<a href="#">Corethrogyne</a> ( <a href="#">Lessingia</a> ) <a href="#">filaginifolia</a>	Lavender , Pink	Summer, fall, winter	Full Sun, Part shade	28; 0.5 - 1 ft tall 3 - 4 ft wide	Tolerates a wide variety of soils. (FMS) Tolerates a	7, 8*, 9, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24	Low, moderate
Three Purple-Awn	<a href="#">Aristida purpurea</a>	Cream, Purple, Red, Brown	Winter , spring	Full Sun	2; 1.6 - 3.3 ft tall 2 ft wide	variety of soils. (FM) loamy, (M)	N/A	Very low
Lilac verberna	<a href="#">Verberna</a> <a href="#">lilacina</a> 'De La Mina'	Purple	Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall	Full Sun, Part shade	7; 2 - 3 ft tall 3 - 4 ft wide		N/A	Low

\*Performs particularly well in these zones

F= Fast drainage, M = Medium drainage, S = Slow Drainage



Spring 2023 Kit Offerings

Shade (Partial Sun/Partial Shade) NOT FULL SHADE

Common Name	Botanical Name	Color	Blooming Season	Sun Profile	Sq. Ft & Dimensions	Soil Type	Sunset Zones	Water Needs
Golden Currant	<a href="#">Ribes aureum</a>	Yellow, Cream	Spring, winter	Part shade	16; 6 - 10 ft tall 5 - 10 ft wide	Tolerates a variety of soils; (MS)	N/A	Low, Moderate - High
Fragrant Sage Pitcher	<a href="#">Lepechinia fragrans</a>	Lavender, Purple	Spring, Summer, Fall	Full Sun, Part Shade	16; 3 - 5 ft tall 3 - 5 ft wide	Tolerant of a variety of soils as long as adequate moisture is present.	7, 14, 15*, 16*, 17*, 18, 19*, 20*, 21, 22, 24*	Low
Yerba Buena	<a href="#">Clinopodium douglasii</a>	White	Spring, Summer	Full Shade, Part Shade	16; 3 6 - 7.2 in tall 3 ft wide	Adaptable. (FMS)	2, 3, 4*, 5*, 6*, 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20*, 21*, 22*, 23*, 24*	Low
California Fuchsia	<a href="#">Epilobium canum</a>	Red	Summer, Fall	Full Sun, Part Shade	2-13#; 0.25 - 1.5 ft tall 2-3 ft wide	Tolerates clay and sand. Tolerates Serpentine Soil. (FMS)	N/A	Very Low, Low

\*Performs particularly well in these zones

# Depending on cultivar (E. canum covers 3 square feet)

F= Fast drainage, M = Medium drainage, S = Slow Drainage